

10th January 1950]

As regards villages with a population of less than 500, there is no special provision in the Post-war Road Development Programme for providing them with access roads but quite a good number of them lie on or very close to the roads existing or proposed under the programme. It is anticipated that the present programme will serve nearly 95 per cent of the rural population.

- (d) No distinction is made between panchayat and non-panchayat areas in regard to provision of roads. As stated in the answer to clauses (b) and (c) the Post-war Road Development Programme aims at providing an adequate net work of roads so that every village with a population of 500 and more is served with a village road to connect with the nearest main road. The formation of further roads, streets and lanes, etc., required in each village is not contemplated in the Post-war Road Plan. These are to be formed by the Panchayat Boards in panchayat areas and by District Boards in non-panchayat areas. The Highways Department has to prepare plans and estimates for the works, if required by the Panchayat Board or the District Board. In the case of the District Boards, the Highways Department will execute them but in the case of Panchayat Board works, the Panchayat Board ordinarily executes them through contractors and the Highways Department only checkmeasures the work. Where however technical supervision is required the Highways Department executes them or supervises them. The employment of special staff for preparing plans and estimates for Panchayat Board works and for supervising their execution is being sanctioned wherever necessary.

APPENDIX II.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 100 asked by Sri M. Narayana Rao at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on 10th January 1950, page 1038 supra.]

INSPECTION REPORTS OF SRI G. RAMACHANDRAN, M.L.A., ON THE FIRKA DEVELOPMENT WORK IN CERTAIN FIRKAS AND CENTRES.

Letter from Sri G. RAMACHANDRAN, Secretary, A.I.V.I.A. (Wardha), to the Provincial Firka Development Officer, Madras, dated camp Madras, the 18th May 1949.

Herewith is a brief interim report from me on Firka Development work as I have studied it in four typical firkas. Due to my own other engagements it has not been possible yet for me to cover any other firka. In these four firkas I visited 43

[10th January 1950]

villages in the course of a tour of more than fortnight. The four firkas I visited and where I studied all the various items of work going on in them under the Firka Development Department, were—

- (1) The Tiruvallur Firka in the Chingleput district.
- (2) The Tirumangalam Firka in the Mathurai district.
- (3) The Palladam Firka in the Coimbatore district.
- (4) The Avanashi Firka (Intensive Khadi Centre) in the Coimbatore district.

I have divided this brief interim report, for convenience, into three parts, namely, (1) Features of the work in the four firkas, (2) Impressions of the work, and (3) My suggestions for future work.

If and when I am able to visit the other firkas, I shall write a fuller and final report on the whole of the Firka Development work in the Province to help you to assess the work so far done and to plan further work.

BRIEF INTERIM REPORT ON FIRKA DEVELOPMENT WORK.

PART I.

Features of Firka Development work in 43 villages visited.

The following is the list of the villages I visited with the dates of the visits:—

Serial number and villages.	Firkas.	Date.
1 Tirur village and Tirur cheri.	Tiruvallur Firka (Chingleput district).	1st April 1949.
2 Kakalur village and Kakalur cheri.	Do.	2nd April 1949.
3 Ikkadu village	Do.	Do.
4 Kilanur village	Do.	Do.
5 Chittathur village	Do.	Do.
6 Karaikeni village ..	Tirumangalam Firka (Mathurai district)	5th April 1949.
7 Kallupatti village ..	Do.	6th April 1949.
8 Silarpatti village ..	Do.	8th April 1949.
9 Nedungulam village ..	Do.	Do.
10 Kilakottai village ..	Do.	Do.
11 Melaicottai village ..	Do.	Do.
12 Kamatchipuram village.	Do.	Do.
13 Arasapatti village ..	Do.	Do.
14 Viraperumalpuram village.	Do.	Do.
15 Rengapalaiyam village.	Do.	9th April 1949.

10th January 1950]

Serial number and villages.	Firkas.	Date.
16 Kundathur village	Tirumangalam Firka (Mathurai district).	9th April 1949.
17 Kottanipatti village ..	Do.	Do.
18 Muthulingapuram .. village.	Do.	Do.
19 Retripatti village ..	Do.	Do.
20 Venkatachalapuram village.	Do.	Do.
21 Semmipalaiyam village.	Palladam Firka (Coimbatore district).	18th April 1949.
22 Manickpuram village.	Do.	Do.
23 Kalivelampatti village.	Do.	Do.
24 Samigoundanpalaiyam village.	Do.	19th April 1949.
25 Arakkulam village ..	Do.	Do.
26 Iyyampalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
27 Panickempattai village.	Do.	Do.
28 Vedugupalaiyam Pudur village.	Do.	20th April 1949.
29 Pethampalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
30 Nallurpalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
31 Venkatapuram village.	Do.	Do.
32 Vadugupalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
33 Chidambaram village.	Do.	Do.
34 Piliappampalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
35 Vadugappalaiyam village.	Avanashi Firka (Coim- batore district) (Inten- sive Khadi Centre).	21st April 1949.
36 Cheyur village ..	Do.	Do.
37 Salaipalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
38 Suripalaiyam village ..	Do.	Do.
39 Perumanallor village.	Do.	23rd April 1949.
40 Muttiankinar village ..	Do.	Do.
41 Ittiveerampalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
42 Velayudhanpalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.
43 Semmimalaipalaiyam village.	Do.	Do.

[10th January 1950]

General remarks.—The above four Firkas of Tiruvallur in the Chingleput district, Tirumangalam in the Mathurai district, Palladam in the Coimbatore district and the Intensive Khadi Centre in Avanashi in the Coimbatore district were selected for the first round of visits as four typical Firkas. The Tiruvallur Firka is one of the weak Firkas, the Tirumangalam Firka is one of the strong Firkas, the Palladam Firka is an average Firka and the Avanashi Firka is an intensive Khadi Firka. These four Firkas thus give some idea of Firka Development work in the Province as a whole in various stages of development and they portray in miniature what is going on throughout the Province.

At Veerapandi, near Tiruppur, in the Jannalal Vidyalaya run by the Tamil Nad, All-India Spinners' Association, I spent a week with all the Firka Development Officers assembled there for a three weeks' training camp. There I carefully went into the reports of work in all the various Firkas of the Province and thus obtained a detailed picture of what was going on in all the Firkas. That picture only confirmed my impression that what I had seen in the four Firkas I had visited was more or less the pattern of the work going on in the other Firkas. At the Veerapandi Training Camp, I took detailed classes and elicited full information from all the Firka Development Officers under training. Therefore, though I have called this only a brief interim report, the facts contained in it and the suggestions made in it should be of some value assessing the work that is being done and in planning for the future development of the work in the Province.

It will be seen that I was able to visit and study the work in 43 villages in the four firkas. I do not want to give my detailed impressions about every single item of work I saw in the 43 villages. I would rather give my impression of the work of each Firka as a whole and then point out what are strong and the weak points in each Firka. Otherwise, I shall be lost in a maze of details.

1. *The work in the Tiruvallur Firka in the Chingleput district.*—The Tiruvallur Firka is important because it is near Madras and it is likely that many of those interested in studying Firka Development work might go to this firka as it is easily accessible from Madras.

The Firka Development Officer is an old Congressman. Sri Parthasarathi Ayyangar, B.A., B.L. He is mentally an enthusiast and earnest about his work. But his age and health stand in the way of quick and vigorous work and of adequate travelling about. I had the clear impression that he was, therefore, sitting tight on the few centres of work already started and on some items of work already done without taking the work to more and more villages. From talking to a number of people, I have also got the impression that the District Collector, who is apparently taking no interest worth the name in the work, does not like him. Three Grama Sevaks I met were doing good work in their own areas. But they were not getting enough guidance from the

10th January 1950]

Firka Development Officer or the Regional Firka Development Officer. The Firka requires a more active and energetic Firka Development Officer and more active guidance in the day-to-day work from the Regional Firka Development Officer.

I visited Tirur, Kakalur, Ikkadu, Kilanur and Chittathur villages and the cherries attached to the first two. I gave two full days to these visits and went round and saw every item of work going on. Here are my remarks, in general, on what I saw.

Sanitation work which according to Gandhiji is the first step in village reconstruction, is not satisfactory. No systematic sanitation work is being done in the villages. There is, of course, some scrappy work. Such things as the making of soak pits or construction of village drainage (as I saw in the Tirumangalam Firka) are not going on anywhere in a systematic way. I saw no community latrines or any real attempt at compost manure-making. Khadi production is almost nil. Balanced cultivation and improved agriculture are not yet in the picture.

Easier items of work have been taken up. Reading rooms and village libraries have been opened in some places. Some good wells have been dug. Some new buildings which might serve as adult education centres have been put up. Some propaganda work has also been done. Grama Seva Sanghams have been organized in the villages I visited. This has brought enthusiastic young men into the work and they co-operate with the firka Development Officer and the Grama Sevaks in what little work is going on. I met a number of such young men and it was good to see that they were taking pride and interest in such work as sanitation and village libraries and reading rooms. All this is good work so far as it goes.

What surprised me in the Tiruvallur Firka was that even with the little work going on, there was enthusiasm in the villagers to co-operate with the Government. For the first time, villagers were beginning to feel that the Government and Congress men were in the same work together. Even the little work in the Tiruvallur Firka revealed to me the fact that wherever local Congress men and constructive workers on the one hand and the Government agency on the other serve together to do constructive work in the villages there firka development work would go on quickly, effectively and extensively. Plenty of co-operation is already available from the side of the villagers. provided Government is willing to actively help even to a small extent.

A younger and a more energetic Firka Development Officer who will give day-to-day guidance to the Grama Sevaks and who can more fully utilize local co-operation, should be put in charge of this Firka.

2. *The work in the Tirumangalam Firka in the Mathurai district.*—If the work in the Tiruvallur Firka somewhat depressed me, what I saw of the work in the Tirumangalam Firka cheered me considerably. I spent four days in this Firka and visited fifteen villages, and studied in detail the work going on in them.

[10th January 1950]

The villages I visited in this Firka showed not only particular concrete items of good work but signs of a new awakening among the people. It was not merely as though some roads were being laid or wells dug or some buildings put up. But what was happening was a fairly noticeable change in the mind and the outlook of the villager. Let me put down one after another some of the good items of actual work done—

(i) Well construction in this Firka is better than anything I have seen in that line anywhere else. Every well I saw was built solidly and even beautifully with here and there bath rooms attached which the villagers prized very much. Except in the case of Harijan wells, villagers contributed nearly two-thirds of the cost including considerable manual labour free.

(ii) I saw good long roads made and I was surprised to see what enthusiasm road-making could produce in the villagers.

(iii) Firka development work in this area was greatly stimulating the building up of new schools. I saw several new school buildings for which Government grant was only one-third or one-fourth of the total cost.

(iv) The building of community latrines and the task of persuading villagers to use them instead of any open space anywhere in the village have long baffled constructive workers. Even in Sevagram under Gandhiji, it took some years to persuade villagers to co-operate in the putting up of community latrines and in persuading people to use them. Therefore, when I saw in some of the villages, fairly neat community latrines built with the full co-operation of the villagers and fairly considerable percentage of women especially acquiring the habit of using these latrines, I was surprised and pleased. In these villages, I saw this happening and all the nightsoil was being converted into compost manure. In one village at least I saw much compost manure fetching a good price in open auction. If and when community latrines and compost manure-making through them spread in the villages, it will be an excellent piece of achievement. The Tirumangalam Firka might well give lead in this work.

(v) But even more difficult than the above item of work has been the question of building some kind of drainage in villages. Drainage construction in villages has in fact been given up as a hopeless business altogether by constructive workers. It was, therefore, again a surprise and a pleasure to me to find in three or four villages I visited in the Tirumangalam Firka complete village drainage built and that with no cost at all to Government. The only assistance given by the Firka Development Department was the supply of cement at controlled price and the lending of the services of a P.W.D. supervisor to give technical advice. Each house-holder paid for the length of drainage touching his house. That villagers co-operated in such work costing some rupees four to five thousand without quarrelling in the middle of the work and giving it up, was undoubtedly an achievement in co-operative effort.

10th January 1950]

(vi) An attempt is being made to set up co-operative stores in the villages and this has succeeded in two villages among the fifteen I visited.

(vii) Khadi production is being taken up in some centres with success. The yarn produced is given to the All-India Spinners' Association.

(viii) Everywhere in the villages, I visited, local people were co-operating enthusiastically in the work and contributing money and manual labour to an appreciable extent. The Firka Development Officer and the Grama Sevaks are able to make full use of such local co-operation.

On the whole, therefore, fairly good work is going on in the Tirumangalam Firka.

The Firka Development Officer, Sri S. Palaniswamy is enthusiastic, active and hard working. He has a good knowledge as to what is expected of him and he does not spare himself in the work. He also knows how to get on with the villagers. He has a number of good Grama Sevaks spread in the villages, notable among whom is Sri Varadan in the Nedungulam village. But the real secret of the good work in the Tirumangalam Firka is the fact that the Gandhinikethan Ashram is there in that area. The Ashram has been doing constructive work in the villages round about Kallupatti during the last ten years and chief worker, Sri Guruswamy Nadar, has fully supported the firka development work in the area. The good work in the Tirumangalam Firka is typical of what can be done when good old constructive workers and the Government agency combine to improve the villages.

I should add a word about Sri Rama Varma Raja, the Mathurai District Collector. The Firka Development Officer and the Grama Sevaks were at one in praising the solid support which the District Collector has given to them in their work. He has not only given them confidence but day-to-day aid in all their problems and difficulties. The officials of the Firka Development Department as well as Congress men and constructive workers have alike found in him a true friend and guide in all their work.

3. *The work in the Palladam Firka in the Coimbatore district.*—The Palladam Firka shows the average kind of work under the Firka Development Department. Well construction and road making are good in this Firka. Some of the community centres are well built and spinning is being organized in some of the villages. In two villages, I saw house building being done for the Harijans on the village scale. In both the cases, the initiative has come from well-to-do patrons. Morris Nagar in Semmipalayam is a newly well-built Harijan village. It must have cost about Rs. 10,000, Government contributing Rs. 2,250, the rest being a gift from the local munsif. But once the new village was built, no one is taking any particular care of its sanitation and it is already showing some signs of going back to the old condition of uncleanness. That means there is no day-to-day work among the Harijans to improve their habits but simply that they have been given a gift of new houses.

[10th January 1950]

Village sanitation work is not on the whole satisfactory or systematic. Soak pits have been made for individual houses in some villages. But they are not properly made and are failures.

In the Palladam Firka also, I found village people thoroughly alive to the advantages to be gained by co-operating with Government in improving their villages. In one Harijan village, one Harijan woman who along with others had learnt spinning proudly displayed her new khadi saree and pointed to her husband who was wearing clean white khadi clothes. Community latrines and attempts to convert nightsoil into compost manure, I did not see anywhere. Some attempts, however, are going on in the villages to dig pits and gather all rubbish in them to make manure. It just struck me that in the villages of the Palladam Firka I visited, local initiative is not being sufficiently tapped.

Wherever I went in the Palladam Firka, I sensed the Roman hand of the District Collector behind whatever was going on. Everywhere I saw inscriptions engraved on hard stones that the Collector had laid the foundation for or opened everything that had been built in the Firka. I have never before seen anywhere so many inscriptions bearing the same one name within such a circumscribed area.

The Firka Development Officer is Mr. Wellington. He is a well meaning person but slow and without previous training in constructive work. He has yet to fully grasp the ideology and methodology of the constructive programme as laid down by Gandhiji. He appears to be more concerned with road-making, well-digging, etc., than with training the villagers to cultivate local initiative and self-reliance. The Firka Development Officer requires more guidance from the Regional Firka Development Officer in the ideals and methods of village reconstruction work. With such guidance and instruction, I think he will do better.

4. *The work in the intensive khadi centre in the Avanashi Firka.*—This is an intensive khadi firka and has plenty of hand-spinning and handweaving going on. The Tamil Nad Branch of the All-India Spinners' Association had developed intensive khadi production in this area, even before Government took it over under the Firka Development Department. The problem in the other Firkas is to organize khadi production from the scratch but here the khadi foundation of firka development work is already there in this Firka. This Firka should, therefore, develop the several other items in the firka development scheme more quickly and extensively than the other Firkas. Is this happening?

The Firka Development Officer, Sri Thirumalai, is an earnest worker. He belongs to the area itself and is a person of not inconsiderable influence. He is genuinely in love with village work and is working hard to make this Firka a really model one.

Some of his Grama Sevaks are also hard working and enthusiastic.

Road-making and well-construction are quite good. Some excellent school buildings have been put up, Government contributing not more than one-third or one-fourth the cost. Village

10th January 1950]

sanitation work is going on systematically and well. Levelling up the fallows, house-to-house cleaning, making of pits to collect all village rubbish, etc., are among the good items of work I saw. In two villages I saw community latrines newly built and people acquiring the habit of using them instead of the open spaces inside and outside the villages. Compost manure-making is also being organized.

What the Avanashi Firka now needs is to take up the harder items of the general plan for firka development like balanced cultivation, improved agriculture, setting up of multi-purpose co-operative societies, etc. Food and cloth self-sufficiency should be taken up without any further delay on a systematic and scientific basis. Also as in the Tirumangalam Firka, select villages should be encouraged and induced to build their own village drainage without any cost to the Government except the supply of technical assistance and of cement at controlled price.

PART II.

Impressions of and remarks on the work in the four firkas.

In this chapter I want to put down briefly the thoughts that came to me as I studied the work in the four firkas. These thoughts may be considered as the reactions of a constructive worker of some 23 years standing under Gandhiji :—

(i) My first impression was that for the first time, I was witnessing constructive work in the villages done directly by Government. Firka development work is the only constructive work of the Gandhian pattern done by the Government in this Province.

(ii) Firka development work has in it the seeds of Samagra Grama Seva. It is not only ameliorative work, giving villagers roads and wells, etc., but it aims at making them self-sufficient and self-reliant. Even though very little self-sufficiency has been achieved, it is in that direction that the work is being carried on. Firka development work is the only work in the Province which is touching village life on many sides. The All-India Spinners' Association, the Harijan Seva Sangh, etc., are touching village life only at one point or other.

(iii) As I have already stated firka development work offers for the first time, the opportunity for Government and constructive workers to work together in the villages. The significance of this is instinctively understood by the villagers. Their enthusiastic response begins with this understanding. Non-official constructive work has so far been only on the laboratory scale. Now it has to be applied to the whole rural area. Such application is impossible without constructive workers and Government co-operating with each other. The firka development work is an invitation to such co-operation. The Government and the people must, therefore, value the experiment greatly.

(iv) During the last 25 years, one continuous headache for non-official constructive workers has been the lack of adequate

[10th January 1950]

psychological response in terms of active co-operation from the villagers. Firka development work has brought forth such response from the villagers in a remarkable degree. This is because villagers find that the old conflict between Government and Congress constructive workers has suddenly disappeared.

(v) "Would villagers make sufficient local contribution for any work in their own villages?" has long remained a serious question. In the old non-official constructive work local contribution in money and manual labour has not been very encouraging. The position has now changed under the firka development work. Wherever Government judiciously make a small grant of money, such grant has acted effectively as a kind of tilting lever in obtaining a large measure of local contribution in money and in labour. In many villages I saw several items of work completed for which Government contribution was only Rs. 500 or less and total cost between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 4,000. If Government had not paid Rs. 500, the villagers would have gone on hesitating to take up any work. Government funds have therefore acted as tilting levers very effectively.

(vi) Construction of community latrines and cultivation of the habit of using them and the building of village drainage have long tested non-official constructive workers. Even in Sevagram under Gandhiji, it took some years before villagers were trained to do these things. That such work has been successfully begun in some of the villages is a very good sign indeed for the future firka development work.

The construction of wells through the Grama Seva Sanghams has worked well and local contribution in money and labour has been very encouraging. Road-making, also with local contribution in men and money, has also been a success. Bathrooms built close to the wells in a number of Harijan villages have given happiness and pride to Harijan women.

(vii) Firka development work has given an extraordinary impetus to village education. In many villages, new schools have sprung up, the school buildings being pucca and costing three to four times the grant given from the department. The problem however is to get trained teachers. *I strongly suggest that the first charge on the Education Department should be to supply trained basic teachers to these new schools in the selected firkas.*

(viii) On the whole, however, firka development work has so far taken up only the easier items in "The General Plan of Work" and has avoided the harder and more difficult items. Take for instance, the question of self-sufficiency in food and clothing which are the main objectives of the whole work. No result worth the name is so far available, except that the whole work is tending in that direction. A dead-line limit of five years should be given to every firka to achieve such self-sufficiency. The repair of tanks, the distribution of good seeds and implements and some effort at compost manure-making are more or less what has been done to improve agriculture. Even in regard to cloth self-sufficiency, systematic Khadi production outside the intensive

10th January 1950]

Khadi firkas has only begun. Such items of balanced cultivation, conversion of waste land into cultivated areas and increased food production have not been seriously attempted.

(ix) Panchayats are being just formed in most villages. How these panchayats will work, one cannot say now. Multi-purpose co-operative societies have been formed only in one or two places. These have to be formed everywhere.

(x) "The General Plan for Firka Development" drawn up by the Special Committee had emphasized that no real work would or could be done without an army of trained workers. Firka Development Officers and Grama Sevakas have been given one good round of training in the last one year. They have to be trained more, and also more workers have to be recruited afresh and trained. It will not be possible to emphasize the need for training of workers too much.

In order to have more extensive and intensive training for all workers under the firka development scheme, it has now become necessary to train a special cadre of workers who will become the staff for the training of the field workers. This means a Central Institute of Rural Workers' Training, which will produce the staff to train field workers in every district and which will function as a kind of a Research Institute of Rural Work. A special scheme should be drawn up for such a Central Rural Institute without delay. A small sub-committee might be appointed to draw up the scheme for such an institute with the details of the budget, syllabus of training, etc.

Certain conclusions.

The present firka development work in 34 firkas and centres comprises about 1,500 villages. From the point of view of the old non-official constructive workers, this will appear as immense work because no old constructive work organization in the Province has so far touched so many villages simultaneously at so many points. But to the Government with its resources, this might appear as yet only small work compared to the area that has yet to be covered. But the fundamental question involved is whether the Congress Government in the Province will directly and not merely indirectly take up the constructive programme in the villages. If the answer is 'yes', then the present firka development work is the only all-round constructive work of the Gandhian pattern which the Provincial Government is doing in the Province. Firka development work means Khadi work, Harijan work, Basic Education work, Adult Education work, Sanitation work, etc. In fact, I saw Harijan cherries brightening up as never before in many places in the firkas. Under the firka development scheme, the Government is making an attempt to carry out the constructive programme in the right way and with the right outlook. In this lies the whole significance of the work.

Any intensification or extension of firka development work in the future must be based on the experience so far obtained and the machinery so far created. To run away from the present experience or to replace the present machinery would lead to waste of

[10th January 1950]

money and time and effort. The experience so far gained is fairly good and the machinery at work, though it has quite a number of defects, has stood the test fairly well so far.

PART III.

Some suggestions for future work.

My suggestions for the future work are divided into two parts, the first one concerning the departmental machinery and the second concerning the actual work in the villages.

1. *The departmental machinery.*—Attention is drawn to the seven points mentioned in Part IV of "The General Plan for Firka Development work". Though the Firka Development Department has in a sense, and rightly, become a full-fledged Department under the Provincial Firka Development Officer, there is no continuity of staff from the top to the bottom as in other Departments. At the present stage it cannot be otherwise. This draw-back only tends to emphasize the fact that the Firka Development Department has two main sides to its work, the first consisting of its own direct work in the villages and the other consisting of the co-ordination of various other departments in the work of Village Uplift within the firkas. The present state of things within the firkas shows a lack of co-ordination between the various departments concerned with village uplift work. These departments are those of Agriculture, Public Works, Education, Cottage Industries, Harijan Uplift, Public Health, the ameliorative section under Prohibition and the Women's Welfare.

The time has come to change the Firka Development Department into a full 'Rural Development Department' and to co-ordinate effectively under it the activities of the above departments inside the selected firkas. As per "The General Plan for Firka Development work", it is the District Collector through whom such co-ordination was sought to be effected. But the District Collectors are very busy persons and they cannot, perhaps, be expected to take the initiative in creating such co-ordination. At present it is only when the Firka Development Officer asks for some such co-ordination at some point of the work that the Collector sanctions it. The responsibility for initiating co-ordination thus falls on the shoulders of the Firka Development Officer. But he is not a big enough officer in the district to obtain on his own initiative all the co-ordination required for the work in the firka. At present, this state of affairs has not created big gaps but later on as the work grows in extent and volume, something will have to be done to correct the position. Later on, there might be the need in each district for a District Development Officer with status and powers for effecting real co-ordination. What is necessary at the present time however is that the Collector and the Firka Development Officer should work together in closer association, so that the measure of co-ordination now needed may be had without difficulty. If the District Collector treats the Firka Development Officer as a small fry, then no real work will be possible. It is at this point that the two Regional

10th January 1950]

Firka Development Officers should make their full contribution by being in close touch with the District Collectors. The two Regional Firka Development Officers have, therefore, to be far more active than they are now.

Government should at the earliest date take the necessary steps for making available the effective co-ordination of the departments concerned in the work of Rural development.

2. *The work in the villages.*—Some kind of public scepticism has arisen in regard to Firka Development work, partly due to the criticism of those who have not cared to study the work going on and partly due to the general indifference of the public in regard to village work. Periodical bulletins should be issued by the Department giving the public information about the work going on. Copies of the bulletins should be made available to all Members of the Legislature, to the newspapers and magazines and to all those interested in rural work.

The time has come to take the first step in expanding the work. I suggest that two more firkas may be taken up during the next year in each district, thus taking up three firkas in all in each district during the next year. These new firkas should be adjacent to the present ones, so that each of the present Firka Development Officer will have three firkas under him instead of one. The total number of Firka Development Officers will remain the same, but the number of Firkas will increase. New Grama Sevaks however will have to be appointed to cover the villages in the new Firkas and immediate arrangements will have to be made to train them.

So far as the training of workers is concerned, not only will the present Firka Development Officers and Grama Sevaks require more training but more Grama Sevaks will have to be recruited and trained, if the work is to expand.

As I have already pointed out elsewhere in this report in the **existing firkas**, workers will now have to take up the harder items of the work, like improved and balanced cultivation the setting up of multi-purpose co-operative societies and establishing efficient panchayats. The idea should be that two years after the panchayats have been set up and trained to do the various items of the work of Rural Development, the departmental staff should be withdrawn for service in other villages in other firkas. In this way, it should be possible to cover the whole of the rural area in the Province within about ten years.

The Firka Development Officers in charge of the Intensive Khadi Centres should be given special training in order that their Firkas may give the lead in attaining food and cloth self-sufficiency. The entire Firka Development plan should be fulfilled in the intensive Khadi Centres earlier than in the other firkas.

Since more and more workers will have to be trained, as the work expands, the suggestion I have already made towards the end of Part II of this Report, that there should be established early a Central Rural Workers' Training Institute should be

[10th January 1950]

immediately taken up. This institute must train the staff which will go out to more than one training centre in every district to train the field workers.

It would be worthwhile to prepare a small hand-book of instructions and guidance to the Grama Sevaks to help them in their work.

Letter from SRI G. RAMACHANDRAN, Secretary, A.I.V.I.A. (Wardha), to the Secretary to Government, Firka Development Department, Fort St. George, Madras, dated camp Madras, the 12th August 1949.

I send herewith my report of the study I have made of the Firka Development work in 28 villages in the Telugu area. These 28 villages are in the following four Firkas which I visited between the 1st and 7th of August 1949 :—

- (1) The Rajahmundry Firka in the East Godavari district.
- (2) The Dendalur Model Firka in the West Godavari district.
- (3) The Ongole Firka in the Guntur district.
- (4) The Guravareddipalem Intensive Khadi Centre in the Guntur district.

I have divided this report also for convenience into three parts, namely, (1) Features of the work I saw, (2) My impressions of the work and (3) My suggestions for improving and enlarging the work. Please treat this report as the continuation of my earlier report dated 18th May 1949 on the 43 villages which I visited in four firkas in the Tamil areas.

I must say that generally the impressions I derived from studying the work in the Tamil area have only been confirmed by my study of the work in the Telugu area. The work in both the areas is more or less of the same pattern, the differences being only in the shades, tones and varying emphasis of the details due to the variety of local conditions. This is as it should be because no such work as Firka Development work spread over hundreds of villages in the several districts can all put up the identical features. Natural and human data which furnish the background to the work will inevitably show slightly varying reactions from area to area.

I would request you to consider my observations in the concluding part of Part II of my earlier report under the caption "Certain Conclusions" and all my suggestions for future work contained in Part III of the same document as not only good for this report but as a necessary chapter of conclusions for both the reports treated as one.

For the Tamil and Telugu areas jointly, I have now devoted a month's careful study of the work where the work is actually going on. My impressions and conclusions with the attached suggestions are, therefore, neither hurried nor casual. It is my earnest desire that Government would consider my report with care and attention and would do all that is necessary to get from the work of the Firka Development Department all the undoubted benefits it is capable of yielding for the terribly neglected masses of the people in the villages.

10th January 1950]

Before concluding this letter there is one matter which I would wish to press upon the Government. The present Government as every Government must ultimately derive all their strength from the co-operation of the people. Particularly now when we are faced with the introduction of adult franchise the need to organize the willing co-operation of the people in all the measures and schemes of national reconstruction has become one of overwhelming importance. As I wandered from village to village and saw the terrible conditions of insanitation, poverty, ignorance and ill-health under which the vast majority of the voters of our country live, the fact came home to me that no Government would be stable or capable of putting through any worthwhile programme of national reconstruction unless they can touch the imagination of these unfortunate masses and capture their loyalty. And to-day nothing can touch their imagination or rouse their loyalty except a programme of work like that undertaken by the Firka Development Department. In this lies the significance of this work.

Most of the problems in the village are small local problems which the usual big departmental machinery cannot touch. These problems can be solved only locally in their own small way. It is only when these small problems are unattended to for a long time and in many places that they assume the big proportions of a menacing national problem. I am convinced that the big departments like the Public Works Department and Public Health cannot even notice or understand the small local agonies of the villages. It is here that the Firka Development Department steps in meeting the villagers in their own villages and discovering and remedying their little ills which if unattended to can become and do become a major national ill.

Looked at this way the funds invested in the Firka Development work and the skeleton administrative machinery given to it are extraordinarily good investments for the Government. With a little "tilting grant" the Government get the villagers to do work which cost much more and with a little direct mass contact the department obtains for the Government a measure of goodwill from the village masses out of all proportion to the work actually done. That is why I repeat the whole thing is an extraordinarily good investment for the Government. The investment can be bettered and made to give even higher dividends if my suggestions would be favourably considered and implemented without delay.

REPORT ON FIRKA DEVELOPMENT WORK IN THE TELUGU AREA,

PART I.

Features of the work I saw in 28 centres.

The following is the list of villages I visited with the dates of the visits, etc. :—

Serial number and villages.	Firkas.	Date.
1 Kadiyam	1. Rajahmundry Firka (East Godavari district).	1st and 2nd August 1949.
2 Veeravaram	Do.	Do.
3 Dulla	Do.	Do.

[10th January 1950]

Serial number and villages.	Firkas.	Date.
4 Gopannapalem ..	2. Dendulur Model Firka (West Godavari district).	3rd August 1949.
5 Rangapuram ..	Do.	Do.
6 Somavarappadu Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.
7 Dendulur	Do.	Do.
8 Ravulogunta Harijan Cheri.	Do.	4th August 1949.
9 Munipalli	Do.	Do.
10 Vijayarai	Do.	Do.
11 Pellur	3. Ongole Firka (Guntur district).	5th August 1949.
12 Vallur	Do.	Do.
13 Vallur Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.
14 Surareddipalem ..	Do.	Do.
15 Jammulapalem Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.
16 Jammulapalem village proper.	Do.	Do.
17 Turpunaidupalem.	Do.	Do.
18 Mallavarapadu Christian Cheri.	Do.	Do.
19 Mallavarapadu village proper.	Do.	Do.
20 Mallavarapadu Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.
21 Mungamur ..	4. Guruvareddipalem Intensive Khadi Centre (Guntur district).	6th August 1949.
22 Santhanuthalapadu	Do.	Do.
23 Mainampadu ..	Do.	Do.
24 Rudravaram ..	Do.	Do.
25 Guruvareddipalem including Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.
26 Peda Kothapalle ..	Do.	Do.
27 Maddipadu ..	Do.	Do.
28 Throvagunta Harijan Cheri.	Do.	Do.

10th January 1950]

Work in the Rajahmundry Firka.—In this Firka I visited Kadiyam, Veeravaram and Dulla centres, giving two days to study the work, talk to villagers and workers and discuss various problems with the Presidents and Secretaries of various Grama Seva Sanghams.

Kadiyam is the selected village in the firka where the Firka Development Officer Sri C. H. Hanumantha Rao has his headquarters. I, therefore, expected to see much good work in this village particularly but I was disappointed. Except the Library located in the office of the Firka Development Officer and some feeble attempt at starting handspinning there were the other usual routine items only in this village. Kadiyam showed no signs of improvement in sanitation or village organization in any direction. The Firka Development Officer only pretends to stay in Kadiyam but he really lives elsewhere. He is a slow, lazy and careless person without initiative. In regard to one particular matter at least he deliberately tried to mislead me and quickly I showed him he was telling me a lie. He gives no day-to-day guidance to the Grama Sevaks. I am altogether clear in my mind that he will not be able to do the kind of work expected of him. He should be either transferred or his services dispensed with early.

At Veeravaram and Dulla I saw better work. The Grama Sevak in charge is Sri Krishnamurthi. He struck me as a clever, able and enthusiastic worker with qualities of leadership. At Veeravaram he has a good buffalo stud-bull, several bits of street roads improved, three wells repaired and good sanitation work to show. He has fifty charkas in the village and half of them at least are working regularly. The Grama Seva Sangham has active people in it who give Sri Krishnamurthi their co-operation.

At Dulla also Sri Krishnamurthi's work has begun to tell. The Harijan section of the village particularly is looking up. There is not only fairly good sanitation work but Harijans have confidence in the Grama Sevak. One critic who was not satisfied with the benefits given to the so-called caste Hindu section of the village asserted that Sri Krishnamurthi was very partial to the Harijans. That was a good certificate for any Grama Sevak. At Dulla I was able to meet many people and discuss with them how best they could get the best from the Firka Development work. The Dulla village is planning to put up a pucca school building towards which the villagers are willing to make a substantial contribution. Sri Krishnamurthi has a good private stock of charkas for distribution.

Both at Veeravaram and Dulla I could easily see that the villagers were enthusiastic about the schemes of work drawn up by the Firka Development Committee. There was no lack of co-operation from the side of the villagers.

At Kadiyam the Women's Welfare Department has a centre under Srimathi Swarnakumari. It was a pleasure to visit this centre kept tidily and artistically with a good number of women coming to learn Hindi, Spinning, Embroidering and to get some Adult Education. Srimathi Swarnakumari is an earnest worker and has already won a measure of affection from the village women and children. Studying the work at this centre I wished that the

[10th January 1950]

Women's Welfare Department could without delay establish such branches in all the firkas selected for our work. Such work would not only help Firka Development but make Women's Welfare work itself genuine.

From the very start of my study tour from Kadiyam cn to Dulla one problem specially came up again and again. Later in the other firkas also the same problem came up. It is the problem of house-sites for Harijans. This is a pressing and insistent demand.

At Dulla Grama Sevak, Sri Krishnamurthy has persuaded some 80 Harijans to raise Rs. 2,000 from amongst themselves for a scheme of new houses. I think it should be possible in many places to get Harijans themselves to make a substantial contribution.

The question of new house-sites is something which the Firka Development Department should take up with other departments concerned and specially with the Harijan Welfare Department. I shall have something to say about it later.

At Rajahmundry on the 2nd of August I met the Firka Development Officer again and five of his Grama Sevaks. They all repeated that the Harijans were everywhere clamouring for new house-sites. I impressed upon them that though something had been done in the villages I saw, much more remained to be done and that would be done only with much more concentration of effort on changing the psychology of the villagers from indifference and dependence to active self-help. I pointed out that digging wells and making roads were the least part of their work but that their main job was to educate the villagers to become self-reliant and self-sufficient to the maximum possible. Adult Education work in the real sense has to be taken up everywhere. I also told the Firka Development Officer that I was not at all satisfied with what he was doing.

2. *The Dendulur Model Firka.*—This model firka is in the West Godavari district. Like the Tirumangalam firka in the Tamil area, the Regional Firka Development Officer has his Grama Sevak Vidyalaya for the Telugu area inside this firka at Gopannapalem. The Regional Firka Development Officer has also his headquarters here and a band of earnest workers around him. Being the model firka intense work goes on in it.

I reached Gopannapalem on the 3rd afternoon and inspected the Vidyalaya, the office, the library, the dispensary, etc. The whole place looks like an ashram with workers living a life of hard work and simplicity. A local Congressman, Sri Ch. Anjaneyulu, gave 30 acres of land and a building at a cost of Rs. 10,000. The institution is located in this land and the Regional Firka Development Officer's office in this building. This friend has also started a village workshop containing a carpentry, a blacksmithy and a shoe and sandal-making unit on the other side of the road. A new village shandy has been started across the road and this has become popular with the villagers. I saw the shandy in full swing on the day of my visit. On market days the Grama Sevak and other workers do propaganda among the assembled villagers for better sanitation and better living.

10th January 1950]

The Gopannapalem institution is in touch with about 50 villages round about. The library and the dispensary are made use of in this whole area. The institution has arranged for the distribution of paddy on a co-operative basis throughout the local area where Government have stopped the rice mills. The stopping of the rice mills is a great boon in the area, giving employment to many people and in conserving the nutritional value of the rice consumed in the area. I was surprised to hear that even some Congressmen are taking sides with rice mill-owners against the common people.

The Grama Sevaks in the Telugu area have had two rounds of training already at the Grama Sevak Vidyalaya in Gopannapalem.

The village centres I visited in this firka were Rangapuram, Somavarapadu, Dendulur, Ravulogunta, Munipalli and Vijayarai. We saw the wells and newly made roads in these villages. At Ravulogunta Harijan cheri I saw excellent sanitation and a good awakening among the Harijans. There was a good stud-bull and a good stud-buffalo. One remarkable thing was that the Harijans have jointly collected about Rs. 1,000 and purchased vessels for the same, for common use by the cheri on festival occasions. That was a good act of co-operation. The Harijan school in the cheri is a model of its kind and the teacher and his wife look after it with devotion; but a little away is another school attended only by the children of the so-called caste Hindus. Both schools get grant from Government. This appeared to me waste of public funds and strange at a time when a nationwide effort is being made to wipe out separatism as between the Harijans and the rest of the community. I shall have to say more about this later. Here also there was the clamour for better house-sites for the Harijans.

At Munipalli we saw Sri K. Satyanarayana, a lawyer, who became a yogi, in his own ashram. This man is a remarkable person who lives humbly in an environment of simple work and duty. He himself earns his bread by weaving khadi. One of the mottos of the ashram is "No work, no food". The Guru and his followers exercise a silent but good influence among the villagers round about. They do good village work simply by setting the right example.

At Vijayarai we saw a good 2½-mile road made with the full co-operation of the villagers who have paid in labour and land one-third of the cost. There is a local Ayurvedic pharmacy and dispensary which is the only institution of medical aid available in the village. It deserves a good grant from Government under any suitable head.

The Firka Development Officer is Sri Y. Ramasastri who acted previously as the Principal of the Grama Sevak Vidyalaya at Gopannapalem. He is a constructive worker of more than 20 years' standing and he fully knows the ideals and methods of village work. But I am afraid he is overconfident and therefore somewhat complacent. There are some Grama Sevaks and Firka Development Officers without any previous background of constructive work who find it difficult to understand the demands of the new work. There are others who think they know all about it and therefore do not

[10th January 1950]

attend to details. Sri Ramasastry is in the latter category. He should be specially instructed to take pains to deal with details and what might appear as obvious. The present Principal of the Grama Sevak Vidyalaya, Sri Prakasharayadu, is an acquisition to our work.

At Dendulur we saw a plot of excellent land donated by Srimathi Hymavathi Devi, a well-to-do lady of the village, for locating a unit of medical work. I understand she has also donated Rs. 20,000 in cash for the same work. But nothing has been done with these gifts. It also does not appear as though anything will be done in the near future. Perhaps proposals are going about between several departments concerned. In such a case, why should not the Firka Development Department have the freedom to find out some medical men or women and to ask them to settle down and start the work without waiting indefinitely for some action from the Medical Department? This and similar other instances raise important issues which I shall discuss later. At Dendulur I also saw a big village tank repaired for which the villagers paid Rs. 5,000.

3. *Ongole Firka.*—This is in the Guntur district and I visited nine village centres in it. In this firka I had a fairly and extensive view of the work going on. In all the nine villages Firka Development work has become popular and people are looking to our workers for guidance and assistance. Sanitation in these villages is the best I have so far seen. Levelling up of street roads, general cleanliness and well-made manure pits were features of the work in these villages. Spaces between village houses and the backyards were free of filth, bad smell and ugliness. This is a remarkable achievement. We saw a number of wells which were also better built than in the other two firkas. The village library system is working well. Stud-bulls and stud-buffaloes and even Berkshire pigs are popular in the villages. At Jammulapalem I saw a library built at a cost of Rs. 2,800 to which Government grant paid was only Rs. 500.

In almost all the nine villages I visited, I saw separate Adi-Andhra schools for Harijans and for the so-called caste Hindus within the same village. At one end is the Adi-Andhra school with a majority of Harijan children and a very small number of other children and at the other end of the village a much better school with only caste Hindu children and not a single Harijan child. Both the Adi-Andhra and the other schools receive Government grant. When I made careful enquiries, the caste Hindu teachers and villagers in the latter schools kept on repeating that no one prevented Harijan children from joining these schools. But no one came, that was all. Curiously again in every case, the Adi-Andhra schools receiving Government aid had only Christian teachers. It seems to me that caste Hindus and the Christian teachers are in some silent agreement in regard to this matter. It suits the caste Hindus to pretend that Harijan children find it inconvenient to come to these schools and it suits the Christian teachers to attract all the Harijan children to their schools. To me, it is not a question of Christians versus Hindus. But why should the separatism of the Adi-Andhra schools be perpetuated even

10th January 1950]

to-day when all such separatism becomes the betrayal of the new nationhood in India. How does the Education Department make grants to two schools at two ends of the same village and that in village after village. This is a matter for the immediate and careful attention of the Government.

The Firka Development Officer Sri Bavaji is an ex-I.N.A. man and has a sense of patriotism. But he should understand more fully the ideas and methods of constructive work in village. I think he also does not stay regularly in the Vallur village where he is expected to stay and his family is elsewhere. The idea that the Firka Development Officers should stay in a selected village is of fundamental importance and no relaxation of this rule should be permitted. The Grama Sevaks I met in this area are generally smart and hard-working people but I have the clear impression that they, like the Grama Sevaks in most of the places, should have more day-to-day guidance from the Firka Development Officers and the Regional Firka Development Officer.

I had crowded meetings in some of the villages attended by large numbers of women. The women also have begun to feel the warmth of the new work. The Women's Welfare department should concentrate on training and sending their women workers to the firkas where our work is going on because such women workers will be able to make use of the awakening among women. The women of the villages are calling for such work and there should be no delay in meeting the demand. Throughout the Ongole villages there was enthusiasam and a willing spirit of co-operation.

4. *Guruvareddipalem Intensive Khadi Centre.*—The centres visited in this firka are the eight villages mentioned in the list in Part I. One big piece of work in this firka is an eight miles long ring road linking up a number of villages. Villagers have met one-third the cost by giving labour and the necessary land. At Santhanuthalapadu and at Guravareddipalem we saw khadi in its natural environment, the villagers spinning, weaving and wearing their own khaddar. The stocks of khadi at these villages is worth only Rs. 20,000 but that gives no idea of khadi production in this area. The weavers are Harijans and when I asked some caste Hindus who appeared orthodox how they can wear khadi woven by Harijans, they smilingly said that they dip the cloth in water before taking it in ! It was easy for me to expose the superstition underlying such conduct. The khaddar produced is even and strong. I met here more villagers wearing khadi than in any other place I have known. For the first time in the Telugu area I saw village latrines being made and used. But curiously three or four latrines I saw in these villages are flush latrines with porcelain equipment. The water is flushed from buckets and the rubbish is flushed into septic tanks. Curiously again villagers seem to be proud about these latrines but I saw evidence already that such latrines might not be maintained properly. In one place children have gathered leaves and thorns and tried to dump them into the flushes. Everywhere villagers have met at least one-third the cost of these latrines. I am afraid, however, that in a few months

[10th January 1950]

these latrines might become filthy without proper care. Moreover, all the manure value of human refuse is lost in the septic tanks. I am of the view that trench latrines should be encouraged in preference to the flush latrines.

In this area also villages have Adi-Andhra schools and other schools within the same circumference, and in every case Christian teachers are in charge of the Adi-Andhra schools. The same convenience of arrangement between the caste Hindus and the Christian teachers I have already referred to is accepted in this area also.

At Rudravaram I saw a beautiful building which would to-day cost Rs. 50,000 given to the Firka Development work for locating a health unit free of rent for 20 years. Here again, nothing has been done and perhaps nothing done for a long time. Why should not the Firka Development Department be free to make use of this building for a maternity centre with a trained midwife in charge without waiting for other moves and developments. Maternity centres are the crying need in the villages. It would be worthwhile for the Firka Development Department to offer facilities to the Andhra branch of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust to open Maternity centres in such places.

At Maddipadu, I saw a library building costing about Rs. 6,000 collected entirely by the villagers. At Santhanuthalapadu also we saw a library building costing Rs. 2,500 to which Firka Development grant was only Rs. 500. In this area as in others the rural library system of the department is working very well.

Several step wells which had become difficult and dilapidated have now been rebuilt as draw wells much to the convenience of the villagers.

One of the Grama Sevaks Sri Narasimham, himself a Harijan, stays in the Throvagunta cheri. He is a good fighter on the side of the Harijans and has created quite a lot of healthy trouble in the locality. He is popular with the Harijans and gives them good leadership. We had an inter-caste dinner at his place at which his wife served the food along with another Harijan woman.

The Firka Development Officer Sri Satyanarayana is a good worker and also a champion of the Harijans.

PART II.

My impressions of the work.

1. As in the Tamil area so in the Telugu area also village people are happy and inspired by the fact that the Firka Development work is village work in which Congress constructive workers and Government have become one.

2. In the Telugu area also Firka Development work is developing slowly as Samagra Grama Seva, touching village life at as many points as possible.

3. In the Telugu area also villagers are enthusiastic about the new programmes of work and are readily offering their co-operation. In the Ongole Firka and in the Guruvareddipalem centre this was specially so.

10th January 1950]

4. Local contribution for wells and roads is on a smaller scale and proportion than in the Tamil area. This is surprising because the Telugu villages, I saw were more prosperous than those in the Tamil area. Perhaps the idea has gone out in the Telugu area that Government would be very free with their funds. I am quite sure that if the villagers in the prosperous Telugu villages are properly guided, a larger proportion of local contribution would be forthcoming. The Firka Development Officers should take the responsibility in explaining the position to the villagers.

5. Sanitation in the Ongole and Guruvareddipalem villages was distinctly better than what I saw in the Tamil villages. But construction of latrines and compost manure making in the proper way have yet to be organized. The craze for flush latrines must not be encouraged.

6. The making of manure pits is systematic and good almost everywhere we went.

7. The wells in the Telugu area seem to be more costly and generally less well built than in the Tamil districts. No attempt is made to attach bath rooms to village wells. Latrines and bath rooms are urgently needed for village women who suffer greatly for lack of these. The Regional Firka Development Officer and the Firka Development Officers must give more attention to this work.

8. Making new schools has received as in the Tamil area an impetus from the Firka Development work but not to the same extent as in Tamilnad. Continuation of separate schools for Harijans and others in the same village for any reason whatsoever must be put a stop to and Grama Sevaks and Firka Development Officers must combine to effect this reform without delay.

9. Grama Seva Sanghams have been formed almost in all villages, but they are not active enough and are not given enough guidance. The Regional Firka Development Officer must look into this matter more fully. It would be a good idea to give groups of village adults from place to place and from time to time one week's training camps to enable them to appreciate and to co-operate with our work. Such training camps would help in preparing the villagers to receive our assistance and to give back their assistance. It would be a programme of easy adult education in villages.

10. I saw no co-operative stores. Instead of waiting for multi-purpose co-operative societies, an attempt should be made straight-away to organize at least small co-operative stores in the villages and wherever such co-operative stores are organized they should be entrusted with the distribution of controlled articles.

11. No real attempt is going on to organize village panchayats.

12. The Lahore and M.B. sheds built at much cost are not being properly and fully utilized. A small part of the space inside them is used for storing a few things, like agricultural implements, etc. With a good petromax lantern they can be used for adult education classes and for organizing rural entertainments and dramas which would have an educational value for the villagers in dealing with their many problems.

[10th January 1950]

13. As in the Tamil area till now only easier items like digging wells and making roads, etc., have been taken up. Little attention is paid to balanced cultivation or agricultural improvement or to organize panchayats and multi-purpose co-operative societies.

14. It is useless asking villagers to produce more food without even improving small old irrigation tanks which have become useless due to many reasons. Improvement of such tanks should be given first priority in the work of Firka Development. Here also departmental delays and technical difficulties should be brushed aside if the people are to produce more food.

15. My clear impression is that the condition of the Harijans in the Telugu area in regard to the removal of untouchability is at least ten years behind that of their brethren in the Tamil area. I do not know if in the Telugu area the idea is still held that separate schools and separate wells are good for Harijans. At Guruvareddipalem we were able to persuade caste Hindu villagers to allow Harijans to draw water from a common well which till now was not open to them. Conditions are ripe for such a reform and a drive must now be organized in this direction. Village temples are also not yet open to Harijans. A temple entry drive in villages is also now overdue. The Collectors and the Regional Firka Development Officer must take up the responsibility for such work, otherwise whatever laws are enacted by the Madras Government will remain only on paper. In many villages it is not even known what penalties the law now imposes on those who would obstruct Harijans in the exercise of their rights as citizens. Unless the Collectors are instructed to move in this matter immediately and effectively, the Harijans will fall a prey to the propaganda of the Communists who are everywhere active to exploit such situations. I consider this a very important matter.

16. The Regional Firka Development Officer in the Telugu area is a real asset to the work. His experience, hard work, enthusiasm and sincerity impressed me. But he will have to give more day-to-day guidance to all workers under him in the Telugu area.

There is plenty of energy and enthusiasm in the Telugu area among the workers and the people and these must be more fully organized and canalized, if the work is to succeed in full measure.

PART III.

Suggestions for improving the work.

1. Firka Development Officers and Grama Sevaks in the Telugu area also should get more and more courses of periodical training as the work is developing and expanding. The training so far has been good but it should become better.

2. No Firka Development Officer or Grama Sevak should be allowed to continue in service unless they reside with their families in the village. The Regional Firka Development Officer for the Telugu area has set a good example in this regard.

3. The travelling allowances for the Firka Development Officers must be increased if they are to supervise the work more effectively.

10th January 1950]

4. The task of increasing the extent of cultivation of food-crops must be taken on hand through the repairing and even making small irrigation tanks and through extensive compost manure making and distribution of better seeds.

5. The separatism attaching to the Harijans in regard to schools and wells must be tackled immediately as already pointed out and the Collectors must be instructed to take up the lead in this matter.

6. As mentioned in regard to the firkas in the Tamil area, all primary schools in the selected firkas in the Telugu area should also get priority in the matter of their conversion into Basic Schools by the Education Department. Basic Schools will strengthen Firka Development work like nothing else and the Education Department cannot get more fruitful area than the selected firkas for converting existing schools into Basic Schools. I am afraid this matter has not yet obtained the consideration it deserves at the hands of the Government.

7. More systematic supervision of the work of the Grama Sevak has become urgently necessary. The meeting of all the Grama Sevaks in each firka once a week in some village and planning the work from week to week must be made more real and effective. Firka Development Officers must be given stringent instructions in this regard.

8. As mentioned in the case of the firkas in the Tamil area, the time has now come to organize the more difficult items of work in the Telugu firkas also such as the organization of co-operative stores, panchayats and of balanced cultivation.

9. The Food Production Drive in the selected firkas specially in relation to rice would look ridiculous if rice mills are not closed at least in the selected firkas in favour of handpounded rice.

10. Construction of village latrines on the trench system must be taken up in the villages systematically. I saw no drainage constructions in the Telugu area as in the Tamil area. It is wrong to think that drains are unnecessary or cannot be built except in the dry areas. Village drain making is so important that it should not be neglected any longer.

11. An attempt should be made to increase local contributions for all works in the Telugu area. I have referred to this already.

12. Now I come to the most important of my suggestion which I have already raised in my earlier report on the work in the Tamil area.

I refer to the lack of co-ordination in the work of Firka Development among the various departments concerned. In the Telugu firkas also this lack of co-ordination has become a serious obstacle to anything being done without delays and many obstructions. Firka Development work has to be done by and through various other departments, like those of the Public Works Department, Public Health, Agriculture, Co-operation, etc. All the old routine is continued in undertaking items of work in the selected firkas also. There are delays in the payment of works long done. A list

[10th January 1950]

of books for a library has to be approved by the Education Department and then sent to the Provincial Firka Development Officer for approval. For installing a radio prolonged correspondence goes on with the Provincial Radio Engineer even if the villagers make a suitable place to keep it. To get a stud bull a Grama Seva Sangham has not merely to wait on the District Firka Development Committee but the matter has to go to the Joint Director of Animal Husbandry. No health work can be easily organized without going through a long and tedious circuit of routine procedure. I found in villages a latrine could not be made at a suitable place because inspection and permission has to come from far away and even then all sorts of technical difficulties are raised.

After my experience in the Telugu area, I am convinced more than ever that if the Firka Development work should succeed, some way should be found to cut short red-tape procedure and long-range exchange of correspondence. In my view an immediate solution can be found if the District Collector is authorized to order the execution of the works once the District Firka Development Committee has agreed to them. The District Collector can consult the District Officers concerned before the District Firka Development Committee arrives at a decision, but once that decision is taken the District Collector should have authority to go on with the work without waiting for long-range permission from Madras. District Collectors may therefore be given such authority pending a permanent solution of the difficulty indicated.

APPENDIX III.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 102 asked by Sri M. Narayana Rao at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on 10th January 1950, pages 1040 and 1041 supra.]

Statement showing the quantities of iron and steel and galvanized iron sheets released for agricultural purposes in the various districts during the period from 1st January to 30th September 1949.

Serial number and depots in the districts.					Quantity of iron and steel.	Quantity of galvanized iron sheets.
					TONS.	TONS.
1	North Visakhapatnam	..	..	..	89	42
2	South Visakhapatnam	..	..	..	62	..
3	East Godavari	..	..	..	199	102
4	West Godavari	..	..	..	215	..
5	Krishna	..	..	..	221	126
6	Guntur	..	..	..	144	30
7	Nellore	..	..	..	231	14
8	Kurnool	..	..	..	49	2
9	Anantapur	..	..	..	113	..